

Meeting Notes
Tenant Work Group
Tuesday, June 9, 2009
6:30-8:30pm
Executive Conference Room
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850

Work Group Members in attendance: Matt Losak (Chair), Guy Johnson, Rick Nelson, Chuck Short

Via Conference Call: Lesa Hoover, Dawn Wunderle, Felicia Eberling

Staff participants: Megan Moriarty, IMPACT Silver Spring; Debbie Spielberg, County Council.

Agenda

- Review and approve notes
- Update on survey
- Committee work plan reports
- Final report discussion
- Website comments
- Other business
- Public Comment

Notes:

Matt Losak called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The work group approved the May 26 meeting notes.

Matt reported on behalf of Alice Wilkerson regarding the survey status. She is working on formatting issues before finalizing the version that will be mailed out. He reported that Parag Khandhar would like to use the survey with his constituency. The group agreed that would be fine, as long he waits until the formal survey has been completed. The information gathered could be included in the anecdotal section of the group's final report.

Discussing work plans:

Committee 3: Landlord-Tenant Communication and Tenant Advocacy

Dawn Wunderle reported that their committee plans to get together by the end of this week and submit a draft to the group by next week.

Committee 1: Tenant Security and Affordability

Guy Johnson reported that CASA has been having technical difficulties, which has slowed down the compilation of a draft. The committee will be able to submit a draft report next week and will reduce the information to bullet points. 75% of the information has already been gathered and only needs to be refined.

Committee 2: Code Update and Enforcement

Debbie Spielberg reported and she and Dale Tibbits have been working on a draft report and they met with Rick Nelson and Joe Giloley since the last meeting. Debbie will send future drafts as word documents so it is easier to comment. Lesa Hoover recommended looking at the website as a group to review exactly what is contained in the website. Rick explained

there is a combination of issues with the website - some information needs to be added, while some needs to be clarified.

No report was given by Committee 4.

Final report discussion:

Matt noted that we have a tight timeline, so the group should begin to decide what the final report should contain. Chuck suggested that all members browse through some of the existing final reports that are available on the County website. Having done many reports himself, he recommended that it be simple and direct so that people read it. Rick suggested the group use the previously suggested format of: issues, findings and recommendations. Chuck said the recommendations could be operational, code changes, or policy changes.

The group agreed on the following elements of the final report: executive summary, letter from the Chair that describes the process of the work group (how it got started, what the committees are and how they were chosen), description of the outreach the group conducted, recommendations, appendix with full survey results and other resources, index of all the issues addressed, list of the issues the group did not have time to review, one-pager with resources for tenants. The report should be about 12 pages in length (not including the appendix).

Chuck explained the Information Office can help with the final report formatting and design. Megan will compile a first draft of the report based on the Committee reports and group decisions. She will begin to write certain sections as soon as possible. An ad-hoc committee to draft the report will take responsibility for the final content.

Other comments included the following ideas: the report should have an open-ended nature; there may be issues that do not surface through the Committees, so the group may need to make suggestions about these things; there needs to be an electronic version of the final report/presentation to present the findings to various groups and constituencies (County Council, Executive, other civic groups); the tone of the report should reflect the value of renting in the County today; the group needs to think about the voting process for approving recommendations and possibly set time limits for discussion of each issue.

Rick brought up Committee 2's suggestion that a Landlord-Tenant Handbook and Wear and Tear Handbook be given out when signing lease. There are questions around who would how to fund the printing of these documents.

Committee drafts should be circulated via email by June 19. The purpose of the next meeting will be to review the Committee reports.

Matt adjourned the meeting at 7:20pm.

Upcoming Work Group Meetings:

Tuesday, June 23, 6:30pm, County Executive's conference room